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ABSTRACT

The 11 documents and journal articles annotated here treat the general topic of principal competency. More specific subjects cover administrator evaluation and administrator role, as well as attitude surveys of administrative personnel. (LD)

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Principal Competencies

1

Burch, Barbara G., and Danley, W. Elzie. "Supervisory Role Proficiency: A Self-Assessment." *NASSP Bulletin*, 64, 433 (February 1980), pp. 91-97. EJ number not yet assigned.

"Educators who have responsibility for the improvement of instruction are seeking ways to enhance performance in their supervisory roles. This can only be accomplished when one has a clear understanding of the nature of those roles, assesses performance capabilities in them, and determines the priority that should be assigned to each role."

Burch and Danley assert that it is up to the instructional leader to do his or her own assessment of personal abilities and to assign his or her own priorities in the various areas of supervisory responsibility. To help administrators in that undertaking, the authors present their Supervisory Role Proficiency self-assessment instrument and directions for its use.

The instrument presents various characteristics and tasks that reflect the results of studies on the activities supervisors engage in. These characteristics and tasks are divided among ten roles that are reported to be inclusive of the tasks of supervisors: host-ceremonial, formal-communicator, external contacts, information and dissemination, resource allocation, training and development, observation and evaluation, motivation, crisis management, and maintenance.

A person using the instrument assigns a score of from one to five (five is high) for his or her capability in each of the entries under the ten roles, totals the score for the role, divides the total by the number of entries under the heading, and multiplies the resulting score by a weighting factor that reflects the percent of his or her time the supervisor spends in that role.

Concerning the use of the scores, the authors conclude: "Only the user is in a position to make judgment about the adequacy of a proficiency score in relation to the priority assigned to that role."

2

Ellett, Chad D. *Results Oriented Management in Education. Project R.O.M.E. The Continued Refinement and Development of the Georgia Principal Assessment System and Its Application to a Field-Based Training Program for Public School Principals. Assessment Design - Procedures - Instrumentation - Field Test Results. Final Report: Volume I.* Atlanta; and Athens: Georgia State Department of Education, and College of Education, University of Georgia, 1976. 222 pages. ED 131 590.

The results reported in this final report of Project R.O.M.E. (Results Oriented Management in Education) should prove heartening to principals. Overall, it shows that the principals who participated in a field-oriented program—Field Oriented Competency Utilization System (FOCUS)—perceived themselves as more competent after the program than they did before the program.

Apparently, it was not self-deception that caused the principals to see themselves as more competent. Analysis indicates that a variety of sources (teachers, students, and outside observers) also saw the principals as more competent. Of these groups, teachers who worked directly with the principals on school problems saw the principals as more frequently and more effectively performing indicators of competency.

The majority of the report is a description of the history and development of the Georgia Principal Assessment System (GPAS) and a summary of the results of using the GPAS to evaluate the effectiveness of FOCUS.

The evaluation examined the frequency and effectiveness with which the principals studied carried out the competency indicators identified earlier in the project. Two classes of variables were used. Input variables are ratings of the principals' competency in administrative operations (data collecting, planning, communicating, decision-making, implementing, and evaluating) and in administrative responsibility (curriculum and instruction, staff personnel, pupil personnel, school community interface, fiscal management, support management, and systemwide policies and operation). Mediating variables are student assessments of characteristics of the school learning environment and teachers' satisfaction in job-related areas.

On the whole, both the external evaluation and the evaluation by the participants support the impact of the training program on the principals' performance.

3

Goddu, Roland. *Observation Instruments for Identifying the Competencies of Principals in School Practice.* No. 152. Durham, New Hampshire: New England Program in Teacher Education, 1977. 27 pages. ED 143 627.

Goddu's observation schedules are firmly within the tradition of competency-oriented principal evaluation in that they present a method of documenting actual classroom practice. The schedules, however, go beyond the norm by including other actors present in the setting in which the principal is being evaluated: teachers, students, and others (including department heads, superintendents, board members, and parents).

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For instance, under the competency "Principal recommends candidates for employment" there are three indicators of the principal's actions (prepares a written summary of checklist and interview results, prepares a written recommendation for superintendent and board action, and reviews his or her recommendation with the faculty and the community). Others also have roles to perform that are directly related to the principal's actions. Teachers, department heads, and community members are to review and comment on the recommendations; board members and the superintendent are to review the recommendations and select the candidate.

The schedule has a separate page for each of twenty-two competencies in the areas of management of the organization, management of resources, community relations, and management of instruction. Next to each indicator is a place to check whether each person involved did or did not accomplish the action and whether he or she partially accomplished the task.

Goddu's approach centers on describing what actually happens in the classroom. It is designed this way out of the conviction that practice is more stable than expectations are and that knowing what exists forms a strong foundation for making decisions on what to change if competence is to be demonstrated.

4

Klopf, Gordon J. *The Principal and Staff Development in the School (With a Special Focus on the Role of the Principal in Mainstreaming)*. New York: Bank Street College of Education. 1979. 97 pages. ED 168 730.

Klopf writes about the entire process of staff development, to be sure, but his emphasis is on the principal's role in that process. He observes, "The reality is that if principals don't assume the responsibility for staff development and some enactment of a real enabling role there may be no one in the system to do it."

Klopf outlines the establishment of a development program to change attitudes and behaviors of the staff and to increase its collective competence. Consistently his focus remains on the skills of the principal because "it takes a competent principal who can initiate, facilitate, energize, and make things happen" to produce an inservice program. Klopf lists thirty ways the principal uses himself or herself as an enabling resource for the staff. These thirty ways are presented as competencies, by which term Klopf includes knowledge, attitudes, values, and performance skills. These competencies include analyzing the climate for change in the school and developing survey procedures to assess the educational needs and expectations in the community.

Klopf presents separate chapters dealing with the need of the person who is planning staff development programs to understand the process of growth and what is meant by being an enabling person. He also covers such areas as the planning and organizing of a program, the activities and processes in one, and its evaluation.

A separate chapter on the principal's role in mainstreaming emphasizes specific competencies required of the principal. Klopf presents seven broad competencies required for this crucial area and breaks each into knowledge, values and attitudes, and actions.

5

McCabe, Dennis P., and Compton, Jack. *Role Acquisition and Competency Development of Educational Administrators in the Lower Rio Grande Valley*. 1974. 81 pages. ED 130 383.

Two fundamental questions are posed: "How do school administrators become competent? How do school administrators internalize acceptable role behaviors, attitudes, and expectations?"

Not in university preparation programs seems to be the answer to both questions. Among the conclusions of this study of administrators (principals, assistant principals, superintendents, assistant superintendents, and central office administrators) are that university preparation is deficient and ineffective and that



informal modes of learning administrative roles and competencies are more important than formal modes. The study recommends that the best aspects of formal and informal modes of skill development should be merged in university programs.

The authors note four informal methods that emphasize the development of skills—modeling superordinates, performing administrative-like duties, becoming certified, and learning on the job. When asked which skills led to their being chosen for administrative roles, the respondents emphasized human relations and personal skills and qualities that affect a person's ability to communicate effectively. These qualities and skills include self-awareness, self-confidence, a sense of humor, patience, and a willingness to compromise.

The competencies that should be taught in preparation programs fall into seven broad areas: human relations, communication, knowledge of self, knowledge of role, values, tolerance for ambiguity, and critical thinking.

6

McIntyre, Kenneth E., and Grant, Ed A. "How Principals, Teachers, and Superintendents View the Principalship." *NASSP Bulletin*, 64, 433 (February 1980), pp. 44-49. EJ number not yet assigned.

McIntyre and Grant suggest that principals who are interested in evaluating their own performance might want to use the discrepancy model the authors have developed.

Whether one uses the model or not, every principal should be interested in the results of the authors' examination of the priority rating principals, superintendents, and teachers gave to eight areas of principal competence, the ratings the groups gave to the principal's performance in those areas, and the discrepancy between the sets of ratings.

The eight areas for which ratings were obtained (community relations, staffing, time and space, goal setting, noninstructional services, materials and equipment, program evaluation, and inservice training) are groupings of the thirty-two "instructional leader competencies" developed elsewhere by McIntyre.

There are significant differences and similarities in the ratings. For example, principals and teachers were close in their two top priority ratings; principals rated staffing and community relations in that order, whereas teachers reversed the two. Superintendents, on the other hand, agreed with principals on the value of staffing but placed goal setting second, the area both teachers and principals rated fourth.

In an interesting case of agreement, when it came to evaluating the principal's performance, teachers and principals reversed the two top ratings, but agreed on the next six in order. Principals and superintendents were in agreement about the rank ordering of the principal's performance in all eight areas. The two groups did not

agree, however, on the level of achievement of the skills. This was not an isolated outcome, as the mean ratings show that principals rated both the importance of their duties and their achievement of them more highly than did the other two groups.

Not only did the principals rate themselves most highly on both importance of their skills and the level of their performance; they saw the least amount of discrepancy between their values and their achievement. Superintendents saw the most discrepancy.

7

Miller, Brian P., and others. *Competency-Based Community Education Administration. Volume I: The Research Report.* Tempe: Southwest Regional Center for Community Education Development, Arizona State University, 1979. 58 pages. ED 168 200.

McCleary, Lloyd E., and others. *Competency-Based Community Education Administration. Volume II: The Monograph.* 71 pages. ED 168 201.

Paddock, Susan C., and others. *Competency-Based Community Education Administration. Volume III: The Manual.* 94 pages. ED 168 202.

These three volumes are the result of a long-term effort to identify the competencies needed by persons in four administrative roles in community education — superintendents, district coordinators, principals, and program directors. Not only was the object of the study to identify the competencies and indicators of competency, but also to get the practitioners' assessments of the best way these competencies should be learned and the level of achievement that indicates acceptable performance.

The lists of competencies generated by the project should be of interest to all administrators, whether or not they are involved in community education. So, too, should be the instruments developed. The Quadrant Assessment Model (QAM) has persons in a particular administrative role rate competencies on an "ideal" form (to obtain the person's judgment on the competencies' importance) and on a "real" form (to obtain the person's view on how well he or she and others perform the competencies). The information generated is intended to be useful in a wide range of areas, including the creation of role descriptions, preservice programs, on-the-job assessment of performance, needs assessments for inservice programs, and certification standards.

8

Seal, Edgar Z. *Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of a Model Program for Evaluating School Principals. Maxi-II Practicum Report.* 1977. 245 pages. ED 156 679.

In a situation familiar to many administrators, Seal was confronted with tools inadequate for evaluating principals and with a history of resistance to suggested changes in those tools. The tools — a checklist and a one-page summary form — included items that were difficult to measure objectively and were based on hearsay or guesswork. This report documents the project that Seal led to develop, test, and evaluate a new method, a competency-based method, of principal evaluation for his district.

The model Seal developed had four specific goals: "To identify for each participating principal those management skills needing improvement or development. To achieve cooperation between the principal and the evaluator in the attainment of school, District and personal objectives. To provide a basis for District establishment of minimum school principal competence standards in specified areas. To indicate the potential benefit of reassigning certain principals to areas of greater competency (e.g., to the classroom)."

The program has at its center a list of twenty-one standards of competent performance. Each standard has three parts: a statement of general behavior, indicators that identify the behavior, and criteria against which to measure the level of performance. These twenty-one standards are ranged over areas of the principal's role

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that include management skills, communication, business management, school-community relations, personnel management, curriculum/program development, and analysis and evaluation.

The standards can serve as a source of direction for professional development, as a basis for determining if principals meet the minimum competence standards of the district, and as a basis for the principal evaluation program.

Seal not only outlines the competencies for his evaluation program but includes the administrative procedures for implementing the plan. Necessary forms are included, as well as extensive documentation of actual evaluations of three principals. The district's principals have responded favorably to the model, and it is recognized as an improvement over the previous method of evaluation.

9

Walters, Donald L., ed. *Perceptions of Administrative Competencies, A Survey of School Principals and Superintendents.* 1979. 38 pages. ED 172 361.

A phrase that appears repeatedly in Walters's summary is the "competencies were perceived to be acquired primarily on the job," a finding that will not surprise many principals. The results do give preparation programs some credit, however.

Sixty-five principals from school districts in Pennsylvania and New Jersey were asked to indicate how important he or she thought each of thirty-five competencies was, whether each competency was acquired primarily on the job or in preservice training, and the degree to which his or her preparation program helped with acquisition of the competency. The competencies were divided into five areas: curriculum and instruction, funds and facilities, school-community relations, pupil personnel services, and professional support services.

Although the principals saw that all but five competencies were learned primarily on the job, they reported that, in all areas, their preparation program was of "some assistance" in acquiring the skills. The five skills learned primarily before entry to the job were all in the area of curriculum and instruction. These skills were related to understanding theory, interpreting research, applying statistics, and planning programs. In another bright spot for the uni-

versities, the principals reported that preparation programs had been of "great assistance" in helping them understand due process and develop rules and regulations for students.

On the whole, the superintendents examined were less critical of preparation programs. The superintendents were asked the same three questions as the principals but concerning sixty-two competency statements ranged into seven areas (curriculum and instruction, personnel, organization management, finance and business management, facilities, political and intergovernmental relationship, and school-community relations). The superintendents reported that fifteen competencies were acquired primarily before entry on the job. The only area in which the preparation program was viewed as of no assistance was political and intergovernmental relationship.

The study was conducted by the Department of Educational Administration of Temple University to assess its program and to plan for the future. The competencies examined were drawn from the literature. Principals noted that nineteen (49 percent) of the skills were very important and the rest were important. Superintendents rated sixty-two (60 percent) very important, one (supervising food service operations) of little importance, and the rest important.

10

Wochner, Raymond E., ed. *Competency-Based Preparation of Educational Administrators. Tasks, Competencies, and Indicators of Competencies.* Educational Services Bulletin No. 52. Tempe: Bureau of Educational Research Services, Arizona State University, 1977. 96 pages. ED 145 510.

The lion's share of this bulletin is devoted to extensive lists of tasks, competencies, and indicators of competencies for superintendents, secondary principals, elementary principals, instructional leaders, business managers, and personnel directors. Although Wochner cautions the reader that competencies and indicators should be taken as representative rather than definitive and as subject to change, the lists are impressive.

Not only does Wochner deal with more roles in the school than do other writers, the lists of competencies and indicators are more detailed. For the superintendent alone, Wochner presents thirty-four task areas ranging from setting his or her time priorities to planning and effecting the closing of facilities. Each task comes with its own list of competencies and the competencies with lists of indicators.

The intent of the study was for Arizona State University to use the information to help it design its preparation program so that future administrators would leave with the skills acceptable for entry-level

positions in most school districts. Nevertheless, the competencies are not intended to be useful solely in the preparation program but are also thought to be useful in such areas as the evaluation of the skills of job applicants and the design of inservice programs.

To create the competencies and indicators, teams of administrators in the positions being studied gathered under the auspices of the university to, among other things, react to two basic questions: "(1) What tasks are normally expected of persons in these respective positions? and (2) What competencies are required to accomplish each of these tasks at a satisfactory professional level of quality?" The competencies and indicators listed grew out of the discussion and subsequent efforts to refine the work.

11

Zechman, Harry T. "Are Principals Competent in the Instructional Leadership Domain?" *NASSP Bulletin*, 61, 413 (December 1977), pp. 21-25. EJ 169 758.

"Yes" says Zechman to the question in the title of his article: "the secondary school principal of today demonstrates to both his subordinates and his superordinates those instructional leadership competencies that are needed."

This was the encouraging conclusion of Zechman's research to discover the competencies most critical to the instructional leadership role of the secondary principal. To accomplish this task, Zechman took the thirty-two instructional leadership competency statements identified by McIntyre and had superintendents, secondary teachers, and secondary principals in forty Pennsylvania school districts rate which are the most critical. The respondents were asked to create lists of the competencies that are needed by principals and those that principals demonstrate.

The lists of the ten highest rated "needed" and "demonstrated" competencies indicate agreement among the groups that the principal is doing his job. For instance, each group's list included the supervisory competencies of observing and evaluating teachers, assigning and reassigning staff members, and recommending the hiring or reemployment of staff. Although this agreement that the principal is doing what needs to be done is strong support for the principal, there is one area of concern. Zechman found that principals do not demonstrate three competencies (setting goals, relating student needs to goals, and communicating about goals and needs) that each group rated as an important need.

On the whole, Zechman's results agree with those of McIntyre and Grant in establishing that teachers and principals are in close agreement about the competencies that are needed and demonstrated by principals. Superintendents also agree, but not so strongly.

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